The Open Court.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

Devoted to the Work of Conciliating Religion with Science.

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CONTENTS:

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THE OPEN COURT,

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THE OPEN COURT is not exclusive or sectarian, but liberal. It desires to further the efforts of all scientific and progressive people in the Churches and out of them, towards greater knowledge of the world in which we live, and the moral and practical duties it requires. To this end it asks for circulation in the Churches, and also in all Ethical, Secular, and other Liberal societies. It hopes for a well-wishing co-operation in what all must admit to be true, good, and practical in the conduct of life, individual and collective.

DEFINITIONS EXPLANATORY OF THE POSITION OF "THE OPEN COURT."

THE DATA of experience are perceptions.

REALITY is the sum total of all that is.

TRUTH is the conformity of cognition to reality.

[Truth being a relation between subject and object appears to be relative in its nature. Absolute truth is a self-contradiction; it would imply cognition without a cognizing subject.

At the same time it is obvious that absolute existence (in fact everything absolute) is impossible. Reality is properly called *Wirklichkeit* in German, derived from *wirken*, to take effect. Reality is not immovable and unchangeable absoluteness, but the effectiveness of things in their relations. Reality therefore implies not only existence, but the manifestation of existence also. Existence and its manifestation are not two different things; both are one.

The idea of something absolutely Unknowable is therefore also untenable; it would imply the existence of an object whose existence is not manifested *i. e.*, existence without reality; *Sein ohne Wirklichkeit*—which is a contradiction, an impossibility.]

SCIENCE is the search for truth.

The nature of science is the economy of thought. (*Mach.*)

Economy of thought is possible through application of the laws of form to thought.

KNOWLEDGE is the possession of certain truths.

[Knowledge is, so to say, the present stock or capital with which Science works. Science cannot exist without knowledge. The object of Science is not only to increase and enlarge knowledge but also to purify the present stock of knowledge from vagueness, errors, and misconceptions.

The purpose of knowledge is that of increasing our power over nature.]

MONISM is that philosophy which recognizes the oneness of All-existence, and the Religion of Monism teaches that the individual, as a part of the whole, has to conform to the cosmical laws of the All

RELIGION is man's aspiration to be in harmony with the All.

[Religion has been defined differently in the columns of THE OPEN COURT, but all definitions that have been presented are in strict agreement. Mr. Hegeler in No. 25, defines Religion as "man's union with the All" (taking the definition from the Lutheran Catechism "Religion ist der Bund des Menschen mit Gott durch Gott," and replacing the Word Gon by the more comprehensive word THE ALL). The editor has defined Religion as "man's consciousness of his relation to the All" (No. 24); as "Das Allgefühl im Einzelnen," the All-feeling in the individual (see foot-note page 965); as "man's conception of the world that serves him as a guiding-star through life" (page 1180).]

MORALS are man's conduct in so far as it is in unison with the All.

[The basis of morality is religion. A moral educator or preacher may justly be asked, "On what authority dost thou justify thy precepts?" And he will tell us that his authority is not personal; he speaks in the name of universal order. Accordingly his authority is that of religion. If it were not so, all his good precepts would have no foundation; they would hover in the air like beautiful dreams that have no reality.]

ETHICS is the Science of Morals; it teaches man why he must, and how he can, regulate his conduct so as to be in unison with the All.

Natural history and the history of mankind prove that here on earth a constant progress takes place developing ever higher forms of existence.

Morally good are those acts which are in harmony with the All, *i. e.*, those which enhance progress, and *morally bad* are those which are not in harmony with the All, *i. e.*, those which retard or prevent progress.

[Religion (man's aspiration to be in unison with the All) has naturally produced many superstitious notions in the world, of its origin, and of its purpose. Similarly, science (man's search for truth) has produced many errors or false notions of reality. But all the superstitions of religion do not prove that religion as such is an illusion, and all the errors of science are no evidence that science as such is a sham.

It is obvious that religion and science, as here defined, are not contradictory to, but complementary of, each other. If religion and science do not agree, it is a certain sign that our conception of either the one or the other is wrong. The history of the human mind has been one of constant conflict and reconciliation between religion and science. Their relation has repeatedly been disturbed and re-adjusted.

The unitary conception of the world affords the only basis for the union of Religion and Science, and opens a new vista of progress for both.]

RECENT CONTENTS OF "THE OPEN COURT."

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IS RELIGION DEAD?

BY C. P. GEOFFREY.

One of the greatest historians of morals says: Religion has ceased to be the moving power in our national and in our private life. Interest in theological discussions is nowhere to be found, not even in the churches. What do the people care for the religious issues of former days? They are quite indifferent about the interpretation of Bible passages and the sacraments, which in former centuries caused sanguinary wars among nations. And a great French philosopher announces the advent of an irreligious age, where creeds will disappear, where no church shall exist, and religion shall cease to be.

Contemplating the habits and the life of our age, we are struck by a noticeable change in the general tendencies of men. It seems that everything has become more worldly, more realistic, and more practical. Yes, more practical! and I should say there is no harm in being practical, if the ideal world be not lost in the realistic aims which we pursue, if our hearts be still aglow with the sacred fire of holy aspiration for purity, for honor, and above all, for truth! Let us be practical, and let us more and more become so, in applying the highest ideals to our everyday life and in realizing them!

The God of old Religion said through the mouth of one of his prophets: "Lo, I make all things new." And a psalmist of the western world sings in one of his deepest lays: "There is no death—what seems so, is transition." Nature cannot die, it may undergo changes, but it will live forever. Nature is life, it is the fountain of eternal youth.

Learn to understand the signs of the time. If you see the leaves turn yellow and red and shine in all colors, know that autumn is at hand. The leaves will fall to the ground and snow will soon cover the trees and woodlands and meadows. But when you see buds on the branches, although they may be few and the weather may be cold, still, know that spring is at the door, and will enter soon, filling our homes with flowers, with joyous life, and with love.

The leaves of dogmatic opinion are falling thickly to the ground. How dreary looks the landscape, how bleak the sky! How cold and frosty, how forlorn are the folds of the churches! There is the end of religious life, you think; the future will be empty irreligiosity—without faith in the higher purposes of life, without ideals to warm and fill our hearts, without hope for anything except the material enjoyments of the present life.

And yet, my friends, observe the signs of the time! There are buds on the dry branches of religious life which show that the sap is stirring in the roots of the tree of humanity. There are signs that the death-knell of the old creeds forebodes the rise of a new religion.

Everyone who knows that nature is immortal can see and feel it. A new religion is growing in the hearts of men. The new religion will either develop from the old creeds which now stand leafless and without fruit, which seem useless, as if dead, or it will rise from the very opposition against the old creeds, from that opposition which is made not in the name of frivolous cynicism, but in the name of honesty and truth. The beautiful will not be destroyed together with the fantastic, nor the higher aspirations in life with supernatural errors. Though all the creeds may crumble away, the living faith in ideals will last forever. That which is good and true and pure, will remain—for that is eternal.

The new religion which I see arising and which I know will spring forth as spontaneously and powerfully as the verdure of spring, will be the religion of humanity. It will be the embodiment of all that is sacred and pure and elevating. It will be realistic, for it loves truth. It will promote righteousness, for it demands justice. It will ennoble human life, for it represents harmony and beauty.

The new religion that will replace the old creeds will be an ethical religion. And truly all the vital questions of the day are at bottom religious, all are ethical. They cannot be solved unless we dig down to their roots, which are buried in the deepest depths of our hearts—in the realm of religious aspirations.

Life would not be worth living if it were limited merely to the satisfaction of our physical wants; if it were bare of all higher aspirations, if we could not fill our soul with a divine enthusiasm for objects that are greater than our individual existence. We must be able to look beyond the narrowness of our personal affairs. Our hopes and interests must be broader than

life's short span; they must not be kept within the bounds of egotism, or we shall never feel the thrill of a higher life. For what is religion but the growth into the realm of a higher life? And what would the physical life be without religion?

THE MORBID STATES OF ATTENTION.*

BY TH. RIBOT.

Our daily speech usually contrasts with attention the state called "distraction"; but this state in our language (the French) has an equivocal sense. It designates certain states of the mind, apparently, very similar, yet at bottom totally contrary. We call "distracted" people whose intelligence is unable to fix itself with any degree of persistence, and who pass incessantly from one idea to another, at the mercy of their most transient whims, or of any trifling events in their surroundings. It is a perpetual state of mobility and dispersion, which is the very reverse of attention. It is frequently met with in children and in women. But the term "distraction" is also applied to cases entirely different from this. Thus there are people who, wholly absorbed by some idea, are also really "distracted" in regard to what takes place around them; they afford no hold to external events, and allow the latter to flit by without penetrating their minds. Such people appear incapable of attention for the very reason that they are very attentive. Many scholars have been noted for their "distraction," and so well known are the instances that it is useless to cite them. While those whose distraction amounts to dispersion are characterized by the incessant transition from one idea to another, those whose distraction amounts to absorption are distinguished precisely by the impossibility or the great difficulty of a transfer of this kind. They are riveted to their idea, are willing prisoners without any desire to escape. Their condition, in fact, is a mitigated form of that morbid state which we shall study later on under the name of the "fixed idea."

Yet such manifestations, daily occurring, in fact all the different forms of "distraction," are, upon the whole, but little instructive, and we shall derive greater profit from dwelling upon forms that are clearly pathological. Without pretending to anything like a systematic classification of the latter, we shall endeavor to group them according to some rational order. To accomplish this purpose, normal attention must serve as our starting-point, and it devolves upon us only to note the variations of its nature and its deviations.

If, as we have formerly done, we now define attention as the *temporary* predominance of an intellectual state, or of a group of states, accompanied by natural or artificial adaptation of the individual;—if this be taken as its normal type, we shall be able clearly to note the following deviations:

1. *Absolute* predominance of one state, or one group of states, that becomes stable, fixed, and that cannot be dislodged from our consciousness. It is no longer a simple antagonist of spontaneous association, limiting its activity to direction of the latter; no, it is a destructive, tyrannical power, enslaving everything, not allowing of the prolification of ideas save in one direction, imprisoning the current of consciousness within a narrow bed, from which it cannot escape, and more or less sterilizing all that which is extraneous to its own predominance. Hypochondria, and, better still, fixed ideas and ecstasy, are cases of this class. They form the first morbid group, which I shall designate *hypertrophy of attention.*

2. In the second group I shall comprise cases in which attention cannot be maintained, or in which often, indeed, attention cannot form. This incapacity is produced under two main conditions. At times the current of ideas is so rapid and exuberant, that the mind becomes a prey to an unbridled automatism. In this disorderly flux no particular state either lasts or predominates; no centre of attraction is formed, even for a moment. Here the mechanism of association retaliates; it alone acts with all its power, and without opposition. Such are certain forms of delirium, and above all acute mania. At other times, when the mechanism of association does not pass beyond the average intensity, there is absence or diminution of the power of inhibition. Subjectively, this state manifests itself through the impossibility or extreme difficulty of effort. Convergence is impossible, either spontaneous or artificial; all is unsteady, undecided, and dispersed. Numerous instances of this are met with in hysterical patients, in persons suffering from irritable weakness, in convalescents, in apathetic and insensible individuals, in intoxication, in extreme states of bodily and mental fatigue, etc. This impotency coincides, in short, with all forms of exhaustion. By way of contrast to the former, we shall designate this group *atrophy of attention.*

Incidentally we may remark that the first group of morbid states is allied rather to spontaneous attention, and the second to voluntary attention. The one marks an exaggerated force, the other an exaggerated weakness, of the power of concentration. The one is an evolution, and tends toward *increase*; the other is a dissolution, tending towards *decrease.* Already, pathology verifies what has previously been stated. Voluntary attention, like all artificial products, is precarious, vacillating; disease does not transform it, but causes it to collapse. Spontaneous attention, on the contrary, like all natural forces, may extend and amplify to the very verge of extravagance, but it can

only be transformed; at bottom, its nature does not alter: it is like a light breeze at first, that afterwards becomes a tempest.

3. The third group embraces, not the morbid forms of attention, but cases of congenital infirmity. Such are instances in which spontaneous attention, and all the more so, voluntary attention, do not form, or, at least, only appear intermittently. This, in different degrees, is met with in idiots, in imbeciles, in the weak-minded, and in the demented.

After this hasty classification, let us pass to details.

I.

It is well, in the first place, to observe, that there is an almost insensible transition from the normal state to the most extravagant forms of the fixed idea. Everybody must have experienced what it is to be haunted by a musical air, or some insignificant saying, that obstinately keeps coming back without any visible reason. This is the fixed idea in its lightest form. The state of preoccupation so called, takes us one degree higher: anxiety about a sick person, or that attending the preparation for an examination, a long journey to be undertaken, and a hundred other facts of this kind, which without constituting an actual beleaguerment of consciousness, do yet all act by way of repetition. Notwithstanding its intermittence, the idea remains vivid, suddenly starting up from the depths of unconsciousness. It has more stability than any other, and its momentary eclipses do not prevent it from playing the principal part. As a matter of fact, in every sound human being, there is always a dominant idea that regulates his conduct; such as pleasure, money, ambition, or the soul's salvation. This fixed idea, which lasts throughout life—except in cases where another is substituted for it—becomes finally resolved into a fixed passion; which once more proves that attention and all its forms of appearance depend on emotional states. The metamorphosis of attention into a fixed idea is much more clearly seen in great men. "What is a great life?" asks Alfred de Vigny; "A thought of our youth, realized in mature age." In many famous men this "thought" has frequently been so absorbing and tyrannical, that one can hardly dispute its morbid character.

This transformation of spontaneous attention into a fixed idea, a phase decidedly pathological, is very pronounced in hypochondriacs. Here, we are able to follow its evolution, and to note all its degrees; for this disease embraces a great many stages from the slightest preoccupation to the most complete obsession. Although it cannot germinate and grow but in a favorable soil, and although consequently it presupposes certain physical and mental conditions, yet it does not, in its origin, rise beyond the average level of spontaneous attention; the augmentation is effected slowly, by degrees. And it makes no difference, in fact, whether the sufferings of the patient be real or imaginary: from the subjective, psychological point of view this is all one. We know, indeed, that the mere fact of fixing our attention upon any part of our body, the heart, the stomach, the intestines, etc., produces in consciousness strange sensations—an instance of the general law, that every state of vivid consciousness tends to actualize itself. Some people have, in this respect, peculiar gifts. Sir J. Brodie said, that he could feel pain in any region of his body whatever, by strongly fixing upon it his attention. Now, to fix our attention simply means, to allow a certain state to persist and to predominate. This predominance, at first harmless, increases through the very effects it produces. A centre of attraction is established, which little by little obtains supreme control of consciousness. It then grows to be a perpetual preoccupation, an incessant inspection of the state of each organ and the products of each function; in short, the state of complete hypochondria makes its appearance as its picture so often has been portrayed.

* * *

It seems almost universally agreed that fixed ideas may be classed into three great categories:

1. Simple fixed ideas of a purely intellectual nature, which are most frequently pent up in consciousness, or are not manifested outwardly save through certain insignificant acts;

2. Fixed ideas accompanied by emotions, such as terror and agony, agoraphobia, the insanity of doubt, etc.;

3. Fixed ideas of an impulsive form, known by the name of irresistible tendencies, that manifest themselves in violent or criminal acts (theft, homicide, suicide).

Although there is no clear line of demarcation between the three classes, still, we may say, that the specific character of the first is a perturbation of the intelligence, that the second belongs rather to the emotional order, and that the third depends upon an enfeeblement of the will. The latter two will be rigorously excluded from our investigations, because they are parcel of the pathology of feelings and the will. It is by far preferable to keep strictly to cases that are free from all alloy—to cases strictly comparable with that state of relative monoideism which is called attention.

But even in restricting ourselves to this group, examples of fixed ideas will not be lacking. They have received different names according to their predominant character. With some the fixed idea assumes a mathematical form (arithmomania). Why are people of such and such a size? Why are houses of such

and such dimensions? Why are trees of such or such a height? And so on with every possible object. Still more frequently, it consists in an endless necessity to count, to add, and to multiply. "A certain woman, affected with numerous symptoms of hysteria could not see a street without beginning at once, and against her will, to count the number of paving-stones; then would follow an enumeration of all the streets of the town, then of all the towns of Italy, and finally of Italy's streams and rivers. If she beheld a bag of corn, there immediately began in her brain the work of enumerating the number of grains of corn in the city, in the province, and in the whole country. . . . She confessed, that not only did she feel impelled by an irresistible force to make these odd computations, but that moreover these fixed ideas of hers were so well organized, that if during her laborious task she chanced to be interrupted by the sheer impossibility of proceeding, or by any other cause, she would suffer from a feeling of agony accompanied by indescribable physical tortures." I have myself been told of a certain young man who spends the greater part of his time in calculating the hours of departure and arrival, for each station, of all the railway-trains on the entire surface of the globe. He generously bestows railroads upon countries that have none, and regulates at will this imaginary traffic. He compiles very elaborate time-tables, covering enormous sheets of paper, draws curves, and establishes connections at the various junctions. He is, moreover, a very intelligent young man.

Another form of fixed idea consists in asking endless questions upon some abstract problem, which the patients themselves regard as insoluble. The Germans call it "*Grübelsucht*," the English "metaphysical mania." The interrogatory form peculiar to it has moreover procured it the name of *Fragetrieb*. A certain man, in a case reported by Griesinger, no sooner heard the word "beautiful" uttered, than he began, in spite of every effort, to put to himself an inextricable and indefinite series of questions upon the most abstruse problems of æsthetics. The word "to be" precipitated him into an endless metaphysical investigation. This patient, a highly cultivated man, tells us in his confession: "I am ruining my health by incessantly thinking of problems that reason will never be able to solve, and which despite my most energetic efforts of will, wear out, without a moment's respite, my strength. The procession of these ideas is incessant. . . . . This metaphysical reflection is too continuous to be natural. . . . . Every time that these ideas return I try to drive them away, and I seek to persuade myself to follow the natural course of thought, not to confuse my brain with such very obscure problems, and not to abandon myself to the meditation of things abstract and insoluble. And yet I am unable to escape from the continuous impulsion that keeps hammering at my mind, or from the unchanged, fixed tendency that pursues me, and does not leave me one moment of rest."

I shall give a final instance of the fixed idea, as reported by Tamburni, on account of its purely intellectual character: "A young law-student, the son of neuropathic parents, was completely taken up with the idea of knowing the origin, the why and the how of the forced circulation of bank-notes. . . . . This thought kept his attention continually strained, prevented him from doing anything else, placed a bar between the external world and himself, and whatever efforts he might make to rid himself of it, he was utterly unable to accomplish that purpose. Finally concluding that notwithstanding his long reflections and far-going researches to the end of solving this vexed problem, he was incapable of any other mental work, he fell into such a state of despondency and apathy that he desired to discontinue his course of studies. . . . . His sleep was insufficient and broken; frequently he lay awake whole nights, ever absorbed by his dominant idea. In this case a very singular phenomenon must be noted; namely, that in consequence of the continuous tension of his mind upon the problem of bank-notes and their forced circulation, he at last retained permanently before his eyes the image and picture of the bank-notes themselves, in all their varieties of form, size, and color. The idea, with its incessant repetitions and intensity, came to assume a force of projection that made it equivalent to reality. Yet he himself had ever the full consciousness that the images floating before his eyes were merely a freak of his imagination." A careful medical treatment, and some very clear explanations imparted by a professor, finally helped to improve his condition. "The veil that enveloped his mind, though rent asunder so far as regards bank-notes of large denominations, still persisted in regard to those of smaller value, the images of fifty-centime notes still continuing to appear to him." At last all his troubles disappeared.

It will perhaps be said: "These people and their like are simply insane." They certainly are not of sound mind; but the epithet insane is undeserved. They are debilitated, unbalanced. Their frail, unstable mental coördination yields to the slightest shock; but it is a loss of equilibrium, not a fall. The authors that have investigated the determining causes of fixed ideas, all reach the same conclusion; they find it, namely, to be a symptom of degeneration. One might even maintain, that not everybody who may wish it can have fixed ideas. A primordial condition—the neuropathic constitution—is requisite. The latter may be inherited, or it may be acquired. Persons of the

one class are the offspring of parents to whom they are indebted for the sad legacy of degenerate organisms. These are by far the most numerous. The others have been exhausted by circumstances and mode of life: physical or intellectual fatigue, emotions, strong passions, sexual or other excesses, anæmia, debilitating diseases, etc. Finally, by both roads the same result is reached. And so the fixed idea, even in its simplest form—that which now concerns us and which appears entirely theoretical and as if confined to the field of purely intellectual operations—is nevertheless not a purely internal phenomenon, without physical concomitants. Quite the contrary. The organic symptoms by which it is accompanied indicate neurasthenia: symptoms such as headaches, neuralgia, feeling of oppression, perturbation of motility, of the vaso-motors, or the sexual functions, insomnia, etc. The psychic phenomenon of the fixed idea is but the effect, among many, of one and the same cause. Our sole purpose, at present, however, is, to examine more closely the mechanism of the fixed idea, to discover in what respect it resembles the mechanism of attention and in what respect it differs from it. This alone concerns us.

And to this proposition we may at once answer, that between the two there is no difference of kind but only a difference of degree. The fixed idea has greater intensity, and, above all, a longer duration. Take a given state of spontaneous attention; suppose that through artificial means we are able to strengthen and, particularly, are able to render it permanent. The metamorphosis into a fixed idea would then be complete; the whole array of irrational conceptions that form its retinue and present a fictitious appearance of insanity being of necessity added to it as the mere result of the logical mechanism of the mind. The term "fixed idea" designates the principal part of the complete psychological state; yet only a part—the centre, namely, whence all departs, and whither everything reverts. The permanence of a single image, a single idea, and nothing more, would conflict with the conditions of the existence of consciousness, which requires change. *Absolute* monoideism, if such there exist, is, at the utmost, met with in the extremest forms of ecstasy, as will be explained further on. The mechanism of the fixed idea consists in associations of states of consciousness in a single direction—associations that at times are loose and of little coherency, yet more frequently held together by a compact, logical bond which expresses itself in incessant interrogations.

Certain authors, Westphal particularly, in noting the differences between fixed ideas and mental disorders designated as insanity, have made the important remark, that "the fixed idea is a formal alteration of the process of ideation, but not of its content"; in other words, there is alteration, not in the nature, the quality of the idea, which is normal, but in its quantity, intensity, degree. To reflect upon the origin of things, or upon the usefulness of bank-notes, in itself is a perfectly rational act, and this state is in no wise comparable to that of a beggar who believes himself a millionaire, or of a man who thinks himself to be a woman. The "formal" perturbation consists in the inexorable necessity that compels the association always to follow one and the same path. Since intermissions and momentary changes of direction occur, these patients, who are gifted with a high degree of intelligence, and more than ordinary culture, possess a full consciousness of the absurdity of their condition: the fixed idea appears to them as a foreign body that has taken up its abode in their system and which they are unable to dislodge; yet, withal, it is not able to take entire possession of them; it remains "a miscarried, delirious idea."

This *formal* character of the fixed idea well shows its close relationship to attention. The latter, as we have often said, is but a mental attitude. Perceptions, images, ideas, and emotions are its content-matter; attention does not create them, it simply isolates, strengthens, and illuminates them; it is a mode merely of their appearance. Even current speech itself establishes a distinction between the ordinary form and the attentive form of the states of the mind.

I am, accordingly, fully inclined to hold, with Buccola, "that the fixed idea is attention at its highest degree—the extreme limit of its power of inhibition." There is no boundary-line, even of fluctuation, between the two; and to recapitulate, if we compare them with each other, the following is what we obtain:

1. In both cases we find predominance and intensity of a state of consciousness, but greatly superior in the case of the fixed idea. The latter, in consequence of organic conditions, is permanent it lasts: it has the disposal of a psychical factor of great importance—time.

2. In both cases the mechanism of association is limited. In attention this exceptional state does not last long; consciousness reverts spontaneously to its normal condition, which is the struggle for existence between heterogenous states. The fixed idea prevents all diffusion.

3. The fixed idea presupposes—and this is one of the ordinary effects of degeneration—a considerable weakening of the will, that is, of the power to react. There is no antagonistic state that is able to overthrow it. Effort is impossible or vain. And hence the state of agony of the patient, who is conscious of his own impotency.

Physiologically regarded, the condition attending the fixed idea may probably be represented in the fol-

lowing manner. In its normal state the entire brain works: diffused activity is the rule. Discharges take place from one group of cells into another, which is the objective equivalent of the perpetual alterations of consciousness. In the morbid state only a few nervous elements are active, or, at least, their state of tension is not transmitted to other groups. It is not necessary, let it be remarked, that the nervous elements in question should occupy a single point or limited region of the brain; they may be sprinkled here and there, provided they be closely joined and associated together for the common work. But whatever may be their position in the cerebral organ, they are as a matter of fact isolated; all disposable energy has been accumulated in them, and they do not communicate it to other groups; whence their supreme dominance and exaggerated activity. There is a lack of physiological equilibrium, due probably to the state of nutrition of the cerebral centres.

* * *

Esquirol called the fixed idea a catalepsy of the intelligence. It might also be compared to a phenomenon of the motor order—contracture. Contracture is a prolonged constriction of the muscles; it results from an excess of irritability of the nervous centres and the will has not the power to destroy it. The fixed idea has a similar cause; it consists in an excessive tension, and the will has no power over it.

DOUBLE PERSONALITY AND DOUBLE SOUL.

Consciousness, or the centralized and intensified feeling of the central soul, does not remain equally the same throughout our life. It is sometimes more, sometimes less, intense. Its highest state of concentration, when it is most intense, we call attention,* and a mental condition in which concentration is lacking, we call a distracted or absent-minded state. The Germans in this sense speak of a person as being "dispersed," *zerstreut*, when his attention is not focused upon one central idea, but is dimly distributed over a larger field.

The object of attention is that idea in which and to which at a given moment our entire psychical activity converges. It may be called the centre of the central soul. It is that part of our soul which, being the content of the present state of consciousness, represents at the time our ego.

The object of attention can and usually does change rapidly. Indeed a certain power of self-control is necessary to fix attention upon one object for any length of time. The importance of the power of attention can scarcely be overrated, and M. Ribot quotes with approval Helvetius, who says: "All intellectual differences between one man and another spring only from attention."

The *central* soul, the ego proper of man, his conscious personality, is not limited to the present state of consciousness. It possesses the peculiar quality, that the present state of consciousness is connected with the most important memories of former states of consciousness. In other words, central soul-life is a continuous process, and its continuity is felt, it is conscious. The continuity of the central-soul is its history in shape of living memories, that stand in connection with its present.

The facts of our life are thus represented in our mind in the shape of a series of memories, and it is this series of memories that constitutes our personality.

It is but natural that under normal conditions every man should have a personality of his own. A man's personality is the history of his life and the sum total of his experiences. The memories of former experiences influence our actions even now. They guide us in our decisions and are constituent parts of our present state of consciousness.

If a certain sensory impression is perceived,—for instance we read a certain sentence in a book,—the impression is recognized as something we had heard or seen before. Most likely every word is familiar to us, the combination of words in this sentence alone is new. All the memories of these words are awakened, not only the memories of the letters, the written words, but also of the sounds; then the memories of the conceptions are revived, the thought-images of which these words are symbols, and with them all those mental activities that are therewith associated. Thus the state of our present consciousness is in a constant contact with the past, it grows upon and it adds to it. The memories of old experiences and the reactions upon certain conditions in former situations are the foundation from which our wishes and desires, our hopes and longings, rise;—they are the elements of that which as one whole is called character—in a word they constitute our conscious personality.

* * *

Consciousness does not act continually. The activity of the central soul sinks at regular intervals below the level of consciousness. It goes to sleep every night, and the existence of the central soul, it thus appears, is for a short time periodically wiped out.

We know that sleep is by no means a state of inactivity; but while in a waking state the life of the central soul is predominent, in sleep the peripheral soul develops an unusual activity. It performs the work of restoration. The peripheral organs clean the brain of its waste materials and restore the loss of its consumption, by building up those living nerve-struc-

* We here refer the reader to M. Ribot's excellent disquisitions on this topic, translations of which are now being published in our columns.

tures that contain the energy which during the waking state is drawn upon.

In the deepest sleep all consciousness disappears, but in lighter slumbers part of the borderland between peripheral and central soul-life remains active, and then forms in the subumbra of dreams a new centre of its own, which may be called the dream-ego. The dream-ego need not be, and, indeed, as a rule, it is not connected with the normal ego of the waking state, so that usually we have a vague recollection only that during sleep we were dreaming of something but cannot tell what it was.

The ego of the dream possesses a chain of memories of its own, which perhaps has never been connected with the memory-chain of the conscious ego in the waking state. In that case, if we do not know of what we dreamed, we cannot properly speak of our having forgotten the dream. We never knew it, for it was never in connection with our consciousness. Yet should we, on the day after the dream, happen to see one of the objects that appeared in the visions of our slumber, we might be enabled by this observation to recollect the whole dream.

We can easily understand this fact, for the sight of the object that we dreamed of brings the waking consciousness into contact at one point with the memory chain of the dream-ego. Thus an association is produced between both, and the whole chain of the dream-memories or a great part of them can be hauled up, as it were, to the surface of conscious recollection.

* * *

There exist certain cerebral diseases, in which, the continuity of the present state with past memories is interrupted through an impairment of the brain. In such cases a new chain of memories is usually formed, and the unconnected states of consciousness combine among themselves into a new ego, which (not unlike the dream-ego) on its own part is not connected with the original, normal ego. Certain important memories that constitute the normal personality being wiped away, the new ego may in all its main characteristics be vastly different from the normal ego. When the normal ego reappears, it knows nothing of the second ego. It will continue its existence from the moment it had ceased, and takes as little notice of the other ego as a man in the waking state bothers about the dreams of the previous night, of which he knows nothing. Both states, the normal and the abnormal ego, may alternately appear, just as the waking-ego and the dream-ego may come and go. It is as if a dream-ego of a sleep-walker had acquired a continuity of its own. In such a case besides the normal personality another personality is formed in one and the same body.

Certain activities and habits,—namely, those that are usually performed unconsciously,—remain common to the normal and abnormal personality, but the two egos constitute separate spheres. Physicians who have observed and described such states, most forcibly and correctly designate this phenomenon as cases of "double personality," and we explain them as a doubling of "the central soul within one common peripheral soul."

Ribot quotes the following remarkable instance * of a young American woman from the "Philosophy of Sleep," by Macnish:

"Her memory was capacious and well stored with a copious stock of ideas. Unexpectedly and without any forewarning, she fell into a profound sleep, which continued several hours beyond the ordinary term. On waking she was discovered to have lost every trace of acquired knowledge. Her memory was *tabula rasa;* all vestiges, both of words and things, were obliterated and gone. It was found necessary for her to learn everything again. She even acquired, by new efforts, the art of spelling, reading, writing and calculating, and gradually became acquainted with the persons and objects around, like a being for the first time brought into the world. In these exercises she evinced considerable proficiency.

"After a few months another fit of somnolency came upon her. On rousing from it, she found herself restored to the state she was in before the first paroxysm; but was wholly ignorant of every event and occurrence that had befallen her afterward. She is as unconscious of her double character as two distinct persons of their respective natures. For example, in her old state she possesses all the original knowledge, in her new state only what she acquired since. . . . . In the old state she possesses fine powers of penmanship, while in the new she writes a poor, awkward hand, having had neither time nor means to become an expert."

In this manner there are formed two entirely different and independent chains of recollections. When the one appears, the other disappears. This duplication can be due only to a temporary interruption of consciousness with its chain of memories, thus causing the obliteration of the conscious personality. Peripheral soul-life continuing its activity, forms a new concentration and produces another central soul which in the course of its development has to create its own material. The patient thus appears to lead a double life, by possessing two central souls, which are encompassed by one and the same peripheral soul.

How much the cases of double personality, rising from the obliteration of normal personality, are similar to the formation of a dream-ego, may be learned from an instance quoted by M. Ribot in his "Diseases of Personality," where a constant change of personality is effected. He says:

* We do not cite here the famous case of Dr. Azam's Felida X——. The statement of the case does not appear well defined and seems to be self-contradictory in important points. It seems strange that, accordiog to the account, the patient's memory in the abnormal condition covered also that of the normal, while the reverse did not take place. And yet Dr. Azam states that a radical change of character took place: while the patient appeared modest and decent in the one, she was coquettish and frivolous in the other. Such a change is not possible without the obliteration or at least impairment of cortical brain structures—which after all are memories, if not of actual experience, yet of instruction and education.

"An insane woman of Charenton, possessing very remarkable power and originality of mind, from day to day would change in personality, in condition, in life, and even in sex. Now she would be a young lady of blood royal, betrothed to an emperor; anon a plebeian woman and a democrat: to-day a wife and in the family-way; to-morrow still a maid. It would happen also that she would think herself a man, and one day she imagined herself to be a political prisoner of importance, and composed verses upon the subject."

The cases of double personality are similar to the cases of a double soul, in so far as both show two or more distinct consciousnesses. Yet, while the case of a double soul may exhibit the normal symptoms of the peripheral and the central activities of the soul in their isolation, a case of double personality shows an unusual and a continuous rise of a second central soul with a new and distinct chain of memories rising from the subconscious spheres of peripheral activity. This being possible only if the normal central soul is temporarily extinct, its appearance must be considered as the symptom of a severe and most probably fatal disease of the brain.

The phenomenon of double personality is a special and an abnormal case of double soul-life, it is a case in which by the weakness of central soul-life part of the peripheral activities usurp the centre for a certain period. It is like a change of party in the government of the mind; other elements representing new ideas and principles with traditions of their own, assume the executive power. The symptoms of independent peripheral activities are like the individual exertions of private citizens. A duplication of personality accordingly can be effected only by ousting the original personality that is in possession of the central executive powers in our body, represented in the motor regions of the hemispheres and controling the muscles of our limbs, especially the organ of speech.

The inference that can be drawn from the fact of double personality seems to be, that the peripheral soul-life of an organism has the intrinsic tendency to build a central soul out of its own materials. Could we amputate the central soul of a man, *i. e.*, his conscious personality, the subconscious and unconscious activities of his nerves would again grow together or at least show the tendency to grow together and become focused in a new centre. Similarly a tree, the top of which is cut down, will send forth new branches to replace the loss.

* * *

The result of our investigations confirms the proposition that all nervous activity is in a certain way psychical. Even its so-called unconscious functions are processes accompanied with a kind of feeling. Accordingly, they are (considered by themselves) to a certain extent conscious. They can not properly be called conscious, because by "conscious" we mean the strongest and most concentrated kind of feeling, and not mere irritability. Yet the irritability of organized substance is the germ from which consciousness is developed.

If the work performed by the many different minor ganglions of the peripheral parts is called unconscious, this should only mean that the feeling remains isolated in the peripheral sphere, and that it is not known to, *i. e.*, it stands in no connection with, the larger central ganglions. The activity of the central ganglions and the activity of such parts as are at the time in connection with them, are the constituent elements of our consciousness.

The central consciousness being stronger than the rest eclipses all the others. So the stars disappear before the rays of the sun, although they continue to remain in their places. If we speak of our ego, or of our personality, we think first and almost exclusively of that part of our mind which we have defined as our central soul.

There is no doubt that the different parts of living substance have by division of labor lost certain properties to such an extent that they scarcely retain the rudimentary features thereof. Feeling is one feature only of organized life. While the dim feeling of irritability has been concentrated in a central consciousness; it is more than probable that in certain and perhaps in most parts of the peripheral activity of the soul it has simultaneously been reduced to a minimum.

In our great cities we have often occasion to observe in the evenings pictures of magic lanterns used as advertisements in the streets or on public squares. We may often be puzzled whence the picture comes; whether the lantern stands in front in a hidden place on the opposite side of the street, or whether it stands behind the picture. The effect only appears and all the many rays of light which are intercepted by the white screen, are imperceptible. No wonder that the lantern in former centuries was considered as a magic instrument.

The Psyche with its glowing, its brilliant, and ever changing life similarly appears as a wonder that cannot be accounted for. Not knowing whence it came, we are almost driven to the conclusion, that here is the inscrutable interference of an extra-natural power. Nevertheless, patient inquiry will after all convince us, that there is no exception to, no annihilation of, natural law. The same natural powers are at work in our soul as in the surrounding universe.

Our central soul appears to us like the white Alpine summit when seen from afar. It can scarcely be distinguished from a roseate cirrus-cloud that hovers free in the air. Nevertheless, the Alpine summit rests on solid rock and stands firmly upon the ground from which it has risen. We see only the snow-covered top

and are not aware of its granite base. Yet the base is there, and though it appears dark to us, it consists, in the main, of the same material as its top in its majestic grandeur.

Certainly, nature manifests herself in our soul in a peculiar and extraordinary way. Nature seems to be concentrated here in all her glory and, if anywhere, here she demonstrates that she is no chaotic agglomeration of dead matter, but a living power, everywhere conforming to law.

Law is not imposed upon nature, but is immanent in nature. It is, fundamentally, nothing but the fact that nature is consistent; nature remains faithful to herself. Thus being a law unto herself and being a living power, she naturally makes life grow according to law *i. e.*, she organizes in living organisms. Living organisms therefore can truly be said to be created in the image of the living cosmos. They are microcosms and can be looked upon as revelations of the macrocosm, of the immeasurable All.

This is the more true, the higher an organism is, and most of all it is true of man. We cannot doubt that there is a scientific truth in the words of Moses, when he says: "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him."

SUPERSTITION IN AMERICAN LIFE.

BY L. J. VANCE.

In a recent issue (No. 107) of The Open Court, I argued that the superstitious element enters into habits of thought and action which still hold in the United States, and, at the same time, I briefly indicated the principal sources from which this element in American life had been derived. My argument was reinforced by many striking items of superstition which seem out of joint with the times, because there is nothing left to which they are suited. In some of these items, we detect savage ways and ideas, which, happily, have fallen into a state of "innocuous desuetude." Like the heroine in "Fortunes of Fairy Lore," the student of folk-lore complains that the world has become uncomfortably wise, and that even the young people, no longer capable of wonder, smile knowingly at the stories of mother Fancy. Indeed, our folk do not like to give prominence to their inherited lore, which seems so foreign and so opposed to other parts of their knowledge. Not alone that people nowadays hide their shortcomings, but most of us, I think, underrate the surviving superstitions which are in our day and age, but not of it. Thus, it remains to consider some of the ways in which superstition has influenced the national life; and, also, the manner in which it illustrates some modes of thought and action, which still exist in the States.

In one of her novels, George Eliot says that "superstitions carry consequences which often verify their hope or their foreboding." As an illustration that this is indeed the case, we refer to the witchcraft movement in New England during the seventeenth century. To be "in all things too superstitious" was the prime characteristic of the American Puritans of this period, just as it was the fault of the Athenians in St. Paul's time. Now, in the matter of witchcraft the New Englander was not a whit different from his contemporaries elsewhere; in Europe, as Mr. Lecky remarks, witchcraft was regarded as "a phase of the miraculous and the work of the devil." It was popularly believed that men and women could, by compact with the powers of darkness, obtain power to suspend the ordinary laws of the material world, and could thus injure their neighbors and fellow-men and women, in some occult way. The New Englander lived in a world of supernaturalism. He was ever on the *qui vive* for "Illustrious Providences in New England." Can we wonder then, that the witchcraft movement carried consequences which verified their hope or their foreboding? Not at all. Thus, speaking of Increase Mather in his recent history of the "English Colonies in America," Mr. Doyle says: "About 1684 he bethought him of publishing an account of what he called 'Illustrious Providences in New England,' in other words, a miscellany to which any one might contribute an account of anything which sounded like a miracle. The condition of life in New England made such a publication peculiarly dangerous." (Vol. III, p. 302.) And why dangerous?

Manifestly, the New Englander was in such a frame of mind that he could carry a superstitious system to its logical consequences. Now, gunpowder is comparatively safe, until you ignite it. So too, the witchcraft-system was comparatively harmless until the people of Salem did not scruple to make practical application of it. Consequently, Increase Mather's book was as a firebrand to a magazine. The "Wonders of the Invisible World," by Cotton Mather, only served to add fuel to the consuming flame. The writings of the two Mathers raised evil spirits not very different from those that they sought to drive out and away. They unchained the tiger in men and women, and whetted the animal appetite for blood. If I understand it rightly, the Salem tragedy can be charged to literary sources. In New England a system was revived by scholars, and the people readily took up with superstition because it verified their hope or their foreboding.

There is a vague notion abroad in the minds of our people and in our literature, that witchcraft follies in New England came to an abrupt close in the seventeenth century. Such, however, is not the case. The successors of the two Mathers in the eighteenth cen-

tury did not hesitate to preach from the pulpit their unwavering belief in "the work of the devil." Thus, the Rev. Ebenezer Turell, a graduate of Harvard, left at his death, in 1778, a manuscript account of a case of witchcraft. Speaking of divination, he says: "Turn not the sieve, etc., to know futurities. . . . . You only gratify Satan, and invite him into your company to deceive you." Specially interesting is notice of superstitious practices current in New England. He says:

"The horse-shoe is a vain thing, and has no natural tendency to keep off witches, or evil spirits from the houses or the vessels they are nailed to. If Satan should by such means defend you from lesser dangers, 'tis to make way for greater ones, and yet fuller possession of your hearts! 'Tis an evil thing to hang witch papers on the neck for the cure of the agues, to bind up the weapon instead of the wound, and many things of the like nature, which some in the world are fond of."*

What a clear insight into superstitious usages which some of our forefathers 'were fond of'! How natural the minister's advice sounds!

Indeed, it is within the memory of those still living that this particular mode of thought quite generally disappeared in American life. But wherever New England settlers went, superstition was sure to go: it followed them into the wild and woolly West, and there became the lore of the fireside. The belief in witchcraft, as the authors of the life of "Abraham Lincoln," in the *Century* magazine, remark, "survived far into this century in Kentucky and the lower halves of Indiana and Illinois—touched with a peculiar tinge of African magic." The authors there say that, "when a person believed himself bewitched, a shot at the image of the witch with a bullet melted out of a half-dollar was the favorite curative agency."

It would be easy to give examples of witchcraft notions in our own time. It is not an uncommon thing nowadays to read of the wonder-working powers of some "witch woman." Thus, I have before me a very long, and evidently authentic account of Barbara Fisher, "the famous witch woman of northern Lancaster Co.," Penn, written by a correspondent of the *New York Times*.† The writer says that, "the woman had the reputation of being a vindictive witch": that, she possessed the power, according to the belief of the people in her community, of bewitching her neighbors, their cattle, their wells, or what she chose"; that, she did not hesitate to act according to the wishes of her patrons and the size of the fee," and that, "she succeeded in maintaining such implicit confidence in her powers in a community where she had lived and operated for more than sixty years that at her death her reputation was as great and unquestioned as it had ever been."

* Quoted by Duyckinck in "Cycl. Am. Lit.," Vol. I, p. 126.
† Nov. 1, 1888.

There is one item of witchcraft superstition which seems to be very general in the States, but which, so far as I am aware, has no foreign parallel. Writing of the Pensylvania Germans in the *Journal of American Folk Lore*, Dr. Hoffman says: "The housewife sometimes found difficulty in butter-making, the 'spell,' being believed to be the work of a witch, *as every locality boasted of such a personage*. The remedy was to plunge a red-hot poker into the contents of the churn, when the spell was broken, and the butter immediately began to form." (Vol. I, p. 134.) I have run across this same superstition in two different states—in New York and in Ohio. Besides, I have a printed account of a case located in York township, four miles south of New Philadelphia, O., in which a well known farmer complained of "witches in the cream," "brought on by a woman in the neighborhood through spite."*

How oddly witchcraft follies survive! To this does the old woman with the broom come at last! Or, as the poet Whittier humorously says:

> "*Our* witches are no longer old
> And wrinkled beldames, Satan-sold,
> Bnt young and gay and laughing creatures,
> With the heart's sunshine on their features,—
> Their sorcery—the light which dances
> Where the raised lid unveils its glances."
>
> (*To be concluded.*)

WITHOUT AN EPITAPH.

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY MARY MORGAN (GOWAN LEA).

[A sketch by the historian of the Podolian Jews. Karl Emil Franzos says:—"I have striven to give my histories poetic value, ... but I have never permitted my love of the beautiful to lead me into the sin of falsifying the facts, etc. . . . ."]

WHAT a lovely autumn day that was when last I was there! The path takes a course of its own, meandering through fields and gardens. No companions had I but the sunshine, and the whispering, withering leaves. Familiar enough was the road, for each year I go there when I visit the old homestead, and each year my attachment grows warmer. What numbers of the people I once knew lie sleeping their last sleep in this sequestered spot! Probably the day is not far distant when all whom I knew shall be found in this little city of the dead.

The quiet precinct was named the "good place." It was the only place beyond the reach of the Pole's whip, and of the greedy hand of the rabbi. The oppressed soul is here released from a double ban. Who shall count the victims? The Eastern Jews never plant flowers upon the graves; they leave the gentle hand of nature to lay the green sod in its own time, and to waft thither the sweet fragrance of the summer bloom. Alas! until within a few years the burial-place was the only piece of land those poor people were allowed to possess.

* *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, April, 1888.

The "good place" of Barnow is of remarkable beauty. September is bright, and the air indescribably clear and pure. The heather takes on a deep red, and contrasts with the fading foliage of the Linden. Here and there a still pond looks up, like a calm, thoughtful eye. Whoever visits this churchyard, and looks round upon the moorland, cannot remain insensible to its unique beauty. Yet, I know not,—perhaps one has to be born on the moor to feel what I mean.

The "good place" is situated upon a hill from which one can overlook the whole neighborhood. Several villages are to be seen, whose straw-thatched huts appear like so many bee-hives. The town of Barnow, wretched hole though it be, looks quite respectable at this distance. In taking so extensive a survey a feeling of joy comes over one. The only limit is the sky, excepting on the West side, where rises the magnificent Carpathian range.

The Jews regard death as a powerful and stern master, well-disposed toward men and filled with compassion for them.

As one wanders up among the graves, heart and brain grow busy with many thoughts. Of course, I do not refer here to these eternal questions—a torturing legacy which one generation hands to the next—to which only fools expect definite answers. But, in truth, are we not all fools, poor fools, a bandage upon our eyes and a thirst for knowledge in our hearts. I refer to questions quite other than these. Whoever, for example, walks down the cemetery hill to the valley alongside the river, cannot help reflecting on the dire consequences of the actions of two Polish nobles who both determined at the same time to show their philanthropy in the same way. In this valley four hundred tombstones record as many deaths in the same year, hour, day. A monstrous iniquity! Four hundred deaths in blood and tears! It happened thus. As long as the Polish kings had power in the land, the Jews paid tribute to the Jagellons in return for protection. But as the royal authority became less and less, two rival powers thought it would be a fitting opportunity for them to constitute themselves the guardians of Barnow. Barnow was able to pay a good tax, and moreover, to take this people in charge would be a service to God. Two armies were drawn up, one on each side of the city, and a like message was sent from each :—"Choose me for your protector or else I shall slaughter you." The poor Jews were in a terrible strait, and there was no time for deliberation. They got together what money they could, and sent the same answer to both candidates, *i. e.*, they paid to have the protection of both. The result was disastrous. Neither aspirant was satisfied, and a slaughter was begun at both ends of the town. The slaughter lasted three days and three nights. And this was done in the service of God and man!

The autumn sun shines as tenderly over these close-lying graves as elsewhere, and the grasshoppers chirp as merrily in the grass. Here is peace. And yet, and yet, it seems as if a cry must suddenly arise—a terrible cry from these graves, and rent the air. A cry, not of complaint, but of accusation, and not directed solely at Tulste and Barnow.

There are crowds of other graves, besides those just mentioned, that bear the same date. There are those that were filled when Czartoryski hunted the Jews, because game was scarce. There are also the victims of the cholera which, in this century, raged through the great plain. The poorest person here has a burial-place and a tombstone to keep until . . . . the last trumpet shall sound.

Every headstone is of the same form. There are no figures, no elaborate carvings: the faith forbids all that. The poor man has a small stone and the rich man a large one. The inscription on the poor man's grave tells that he was honest; that on the rich man's declares him to have been the noblest person who ever lived. That is all the difference. The inscription is arranged according to the rules of the Talmud. First comes the name of the tribe, then that of deceased, then the names of the parents, and, finally, the occupation. Frequently the last is omitted: 'usurer' or 'briber' would hardly sound well, not to speak of anything worse. In such cases it was the custom to put, "He learned the doctrine and loved his children," and usually that was true.

Whoever reads these inscriptions and believes them, need no longer search for the island of the blessed, nor for that Eden where angels walk. The Semitic race is more anxious than any other to show reference for the dead. For the Romans *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* was enough. With the Semites, if no good at all could be found in a man, silence was observed regarding him.

Silence—the most terrible curse known to this people. "His name shall be blotted out." Nothing could be worse than that. In such a case no name is found upon the headstone. There are many nameless graves in the Podolian cemetery. This is meant for a punishment. And there is another meaning to it. When the last trumpet sounds and the angel of God comes to awaken the sleepers, he will go from stone to stone, and call out the names as he finds them written—the righteous to eternal blessedness, and the sinners to eternal suffering. But if no name be on the grave, the angel may pass on and the sleeper never be disturbed. Let us hope so.

The "good place" at Barnow contains many such

graves. In some cases the punishment may have been deserved: not seldom it is the most dreadful that the sinner has met with. The deed was done; the darkness of the grave hid it forever. The Podolian Jews tremble before the world, and a Christian sits at the law court. They prefer to judge their erring brother themselves, and they do it as well as they can. He is compelled to give of his money, or to fast, or to make pilgrimages. While he lives his crime may not be made public; only after his death is it discovered.

We wonder at some of the things that are considered crimes, and punished as such. Whoever thinks deeply on this subject can hardly forbear asking a very bitter question—an old question, and one that will continue to agitate the human race as long as men walk upon the earth.

There was, for example, an old beggar at Barnow—a discharged soldier, crippled and helpless. Nobody showed any interest in him. The Christians would not recognize him because he was a Jew; the Jews would not recognize him because he had eaten so long with Christians, and because he was given to swearing. A pretty desperate position, and the man not entirely to blame for either fault. No army has placed its commissariat under the supervision of a rabbi since the Maccabees went to sleep; and, as to swearing, that seems to be part of an old soldier about as much as an acorn is part of an oak. But, at any rate, the poor fellow was left to starve to death. His rich relations put a tombstone on his grave, but epitaph there was none.

Alongside of the soldier lies a man who met with a similar fate. An odd sort of man was Chaim—a shoemaker by trade. Shoemakers are often fond of philosophical speculation; perhaps sedentary occupation disposes to this. Chaim was certainly a philosopher. The beginning and end of all his investigations was, "Who knows the truth?" It was not enough for people that Chaim made good boots and shoes. His heresies brought him to the grave.

Strange, strange crimes these! As I stood by the two graves that autumn day I felt as if I must bow down and call to the dead, "O, forgive them: they know not what they do."

The light will come some day.

The next grave that arrested my attention was a very lonely-looking one that lay quite apart from the rest; a nameless grave; a woman's. What could she have done?

Two men were standing a short distance from me, so I went up to them and asked them if they could tell me whose grave it was.

After some parleying they said it was the grave of Leah, the wife of Ruben; Leah with the long hair. She was an awful sinner. She violated the law; she and her husband,—Ruben of the town-hall. A wonderful story.

The wonderful story was then related; a history so terrible that I know most persons will not be disposed to believe it. Only those who have some knowledge of what ignorant superstitions Judaism is, can comprehend how such things actually take place. All I can say is that I did not invent the story: it is all too true.

Leah was a lovely girl in every respect. Her father was Gawriel, landlord of the yellow inn. Neither father nor mother nor the two sons had anything attractive about them, either in appearance or otherwise. How did Leah come by all her loveliness? I cannot tell. She was like a bright sunbeam in a dark place.

A Jewess is rarely a blonde, but Leah had such a wealth of long, golden hair as never was seen on anyone else. There is in the Belvedere at Vienna a portrait of a Viennese maiden, by an Italian artist. The orginal was a German girl. That portrait is so remarkably like Leah that one would suppose it had been intended for her.

Pretty Leah brought not only light but joy to the inn. Her relations took great pride in her and delighted to show it. Old Gawriel was able to dress her handsomely, and he did it. He did not do much for her education. She was taught only what was customary among the Jewish women of Eastern Europe.

Leah was unaware how much she was admired: yet was she a good deal enamored of her own beauty, and especially of her long, golden hair, which, when unloosed, fell about her like a golden mantle—a robe for a queen.

It was from this that she was always known as Leah with the long hair.

The men of Barnow were convinced that Leah would never marry; at least they feared not. Old Gawriel—a rare exception among Jewish fathers—left her to do just as she fancied. As a rule the Jewish youth has his wife selected for him; he may not see her until the betrothal or, perhaps, even the marriage day.

Leah did not want for suitors, but to all the same short reply was given—a decided "No." Thus was Josef P—— dismissed, although he was the son of the richest man in the place; and likewise Chaim M——, a relation of the great rabbi of Sadagora. How could any other suitor dare come forward after that? The matchmakers were at their wits end. Herr T—— would say: "I am an old man, but I hope to live to see the marriage of Leah—and the coming of the Messiah! The last seems the more likely!"

One day to the astonishment of Barnow it was announced that Leah was engaged. To whom? To

Ruben Rosenmann of the town-hall ; a man serious and dignified, not rich, nor belonging to a pious family, and a widower.

When Leah was asked for what she had taken Ruben, her reply was, "Because I liked him." Such a reason was never before heard of from Jewish maiden. Nobody believed it. By whose diplomacy could such a thing have been brought about? True, Ruben had sent old Herr T—— to plead for him, but Leah had refused him an interview, saying, "If Ruben has anything to say to me, let him come himself!"

Ruben went. He had a long, long talk with Leah and ere he departed he was heard to say : "I consent; but be careful to keep your secret else it will be the destruction of us both." The father asked, but in vain, to be told what the secret was.

Soon afterward the marriage took place. Under the *Trauhimmel* Leah looked lovelier than ever. But her wealth of golden hair was wanting. A married woman is prohibited from wearing her hair. It is cut off or shaved previous to the ceremony. An artificial erection of silk or wool, called a *Scheitel*, is worn after that ; for it would not only be immodest, but an awful sin against God, for a married woman to wear her own hair. Leah would not allow any one to put a finger on her hair, but retired to her own room to cut it off by herself.

And Leah was happy, to the surprise of everybody, and Ruben was thought a lucky fellow.

One hot, sultry day there was service in the synagogue and Leah was there. The air in the building became sickening and stifling, for a large number of people had been there for some hours. It was an atmosphere to affect the strongest person. Leah's head began to feel dizzy, and with a low cry she fell forward. Some persons rushed up to catch her, but in a moment a shriek echoed from a hundred voices. Leah's *Scheitel* had become displaced, and the long, golden hair, longer than ever, was flowing over her shoulders like a halo round her pale face.

Leah's secret was found out.

The scene that followed will not bear description. There was yelling and cursing and fighting. Had the crime been murder, the wrath of that mob could not have been greater. Who can say to what length the misguided zeal of fanatics will lead them!

Ruben came, forcing his way through the infuriated mob, and, lifting his wife as if she had been a child, he carried her down stairs and home through the streets—the imprecations of the crowd following them all the road.

Ruben was summoned before the council. On being asked if he would consent to the cutting off of his wife's hair now, he answered, "No,"—for that would be breaking the promise he made her when they were betrothed.

Excommunication was the punishment inflicted on Ruben—the worst penalty. It is a terrible ordeal ; too awful to ponder over. No customers came near Ruben's shop. He was maligned and persecuted on every hand. This went on for some time. Late one night some men entered his dwelling, bound him, and then rudely cut off his wife's long, golden locks. Yes, this is what those zealots did. Leah never got over the terrible fright. She pined and died in great anxiety and tribulation.

Ruben remained at Barnow till the judicial examination was over, and then went away with a broken spirit.

Years have gone by. Possibly he too has found his rest, and has slept away the deep sorrows of his heart in some far corner of the world.

Forgive them : they know not what they do.

BOOK NOTICES.

The November *Revue Philosophique* contains much important and interesting matter. The opening article is by G. Tarde, upon "Crime and Epilepsy." Speaking of the relative potency of inherited tendencies, and habits acquired in society, M. Tarde says : "Repetition by heredity, despite the character of irresistible fatality apparently inherent in it, is surely more in our power to eradicate, is more easily manageable, than criminal habits acquired by repetition in the social environment ; and if we earnestly wish it, we may, by preventing certain marriages and favoring certain others, force the great, omnipotent machinery of heredity to work to the profit of society. Society, to a certain extent, is thus guilty of the crimes committed by born-criminals, whose birth it might have prevented."

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The second article is by M. Alfred Binet, "A Study of the Voluntary Movements in Hysterical Anæsthesia." The graphic method, with which our readers are familiar, is employed ; M. Binet continuing his researches upon the alterations of consciousness and the double personality of hysterical patients. Dr. Korsakoff, instructor in Psychiatry at the University of Moscow, contributes a "Medico-Psychological Study of one Form of the Diseases of Memory," and M. Paul Regnaud an essay upon the "Origin and Worth of the idea of the Root and the Suffix in the Indo-European languages." Under the title of "Miscellany" is an account of the origination of the Congress of Physiological Psychology recently held at Paris, with a report of the transactions. The idea of an international Congress of Psychology originated, it seems, with Prof. Ochorowicz of the University of Lemberg, in Galicia

NOTES.

Announcement is made of the following lectures to be held under the auspices of the Secular Union, at the Princess Opera House, 558 W. Madison St., Chicago, Sundays, 8 P. M.—*viz.*: Sunday, Nov. 24th, "Jesus Christ and other Christs," by James Abbott ; Sunday, Dec. 1st, "The Sunday Question," by Augusta A. Holmes ; Sunday, Dec. 8th, ——, by Horace Bennett ; Sunday, Dec. 15th, ——, by C. S. Darrow ; Sunday, Dec. 22nd, An Ethical Address, by the Rev. James Vila Blake ; Sunday, Dec. 29th, "The Bill of Rights," by John F. Geeting.